

Panel Discussion (contd); TSE-0035

1                   So what you don't know here is if  
2                   you build the landfill here and you build it in  
3                   this fashion at this site and you dump all  
4                   these different types of wastes together in one  
5                   landfill with just one type of liner, will that  
6                   exceed the drinking water standards at the edge  
7                   of the facility, and are there alternatives  
8                   that you could build new ones where you don't  
9                   exceed drinking water standards at the edge of  
10                  the facility?

11                  You will never know. You will never  
12                  know under this schematic, unless we force them  
13                  to withdraw the EIS and resubmit it after they  
14                  do that analysis, landfill by landfill.

15                  MR. DEE WILLIS: Be succinct.  
16                  Any more on that question? Okay.

17                  **TSE-0035** DR. JIM TROMHOLD: Dr. Jim  
18                  Tromhold. This is directed to the agency, I am  
19                  sorry, I didn't get the new name. But you  
20                  mentioned the name accelerated, and you are  
21                  committed to acceleration, and no question of  
22                  your integrity or motivation. This is not a  
23                  question just to you. It is the whole concept  
24                  of acceleration.

25                  We are a society that, I mean, the

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TSE-0035 (contd)

1 government does a great job of, you know,  
 2 whether it is Operation Rocky Freedom, we have  
 3 great phrases, and accelerated I think is one  
 4 of those. You know, faster doesn't mean  
 5 better. And to me the word accelerated has a  
 6 political, a new administration came in, and it  
 7 is something sexy like we are going to  
 8 accelerate.

9 People are tired of talking about  
 10 cleanup. Well, these are things that last for,  
 11 you know, hundreds and thousands of years.  
 12 So, it isn't like you can be real fast with  
 13 this. So accelerated is an American way, by  
 14 God, we are impatient, we are going to  
 15 accelerate.

16 But I want to hear the word quality,  
 17 and safety, and I could care less about the  
 18 acceleration I am feeling.

19 I am on the Hanford Advisory Board.  
 20 I am getting a gut feeling very strongly,  
 21 accelerated means less. Accelerated I think is  
 22 meaning less, translated.

23 So, if slowness is just apathy, not  
 24 doing nothing, is bad, but if slower means  
 25 cautious, and quality, and protecting the

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## TSE-0035 (contd); Panel Discussion (contd)

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1 water, protecting the workers' health,  
2 protecting the public health, and protecting  
3 the ecosystem, then not so accelerated is  
4 better.

5 So this unGodly worship of the word  
6 acceleration I question, because I am afraid  
7 acceleration means less.

8 That's sort of a question. Not  
9 really. Because I am really not going to  
10 listen to your answer.

11 MR. DEE WILLIS: Next.

12 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: Make sure  
13 that is a comment.

14 MR. MATT McCORMICK: In terms  
15 of the context I use acceleration, it is really  
16 acceleration of risk reduction. And with what  
17 we want to do is not wait and clean up these  
18 waste sites and knock down these buildings  
19 until the 2024, some of these plans end.

20 So what we are doing is accelerating  
21 the reduction of risk that these waste sites  
22 and facilities pose to the environment in terms  
23 of remediating or demolishing those facilities  
24 so the risk gets eliminated.

25 So that's what I mean by

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Panel Discussion (contd); TSE-0036

1 acceleration, not to make shortcuts, not to not  
2 do it in a quality manner, for sure not to do  
3 it in accordance with the regulations and the  
4 TPA.

5 **TSE-0036** MR. TOM CARPENTER: Just one  
6 comment on that, which is, whenever someone  
7 from the Department of Energy says the word  
8 risk, it sends chills up and down my spine.

9 I mean, they have been deciding the  
10 risk for us for 50 years, and we are feeling  
11 the brunt of that right now. And, you know,  
12 especially a guy who's been here two months.

13 Many of us have been doing this for  
14 15 years and longer, working on this issue.

15 Who decides what risk that is going  
16 to be taken? What is the risk of so many  
17 cancers happening? I mean, it is not a formula  
18 that can be decided by scientists and  
19 bureaucrats who are going to be here for a few  
20 months, or a few years, and then they are  
21 moving on to the next scenario.

22 The public is being cut out of this.  
23 And you cannot say you are accelerating the  
24 cleanup for risk when you are cutting out the  
25 public, which is what's happening. Not even

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## TSE-0036 (contd); Panel Discussion (contd)

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1 two weeks? Not even two weeks, so that the  
2 Hanford Advisory Board would be able to get its  
3 comments in. This the board that's supposed to  
4 be giving the advice to the Department of  
5 Energy and the EPA and the state of Washington.  
6 The DOE pays for it. The taxpayers pay for it.  
7 They can't wait two weeks to hear those  
8 comments. And a lot of those comments deal  
9 with the very issue of risk, and what risk is  
10 acceptable to the Northwest.

11 MR. DEE WILLIS: Mike or  
12 Gerry.

13 MR. GERRY POLLET: I would just  
14 say to Matt, if you're the assistant manager  
15 for the site, I think you should respond to why  
16 the hell we shouldn't have a comment period  
17 that is adequate for people to respond here.  
18 Whose decision was this? Is it your boss,  
19 Keith Klein, or is it your decision, if you are  
20 Michael Collins' boss?

21 Whose decision was it, and why can't  
22 the public have, you know, two more weeks or a  
23 month to review a 21 pound document?

24 MR. MATT McCORMICK: It was  
25 the Department's decision in terms of the

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 comment period, and we are responding to the  
2 letters that have asked for comment response,  
3 and if it is a Department matter, signed by  
4 Keith, or if it was to Ms. Roberson, it's going  
5 to be signed out by her, and I can't speak for  
6 them in terms of what the decision is going to  
7 be or what the decision is.

8 MR. DEE WILLIS: Okay. Let's  
9 move on. This lady.

10 MR. NANCY HANNAH: My name is  
11 Nancy Hannah.

12 Mike, when you talked right at the  
13 very beginning, I thought you said something  
14 about the liners, they disappear after a  
15 certain number of years. Is that right?

16 And if so, is there other ways of  
17 protecting our groundwater other than liners,  
18 or is there some new technology coming out? I  
19 mean, why are we -- Did I misinterpret that?  
20 Or is there something else going on here?

21 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: No. We  
22 only take -- As a matter of fact, the analysis  
23 doesn't take credit for the liners at all, even  
24 when they exist, or would exist.

25 But their purpose is to exist during

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 the operational period while you are putting  
2 waste in. After that, after you close the  
3 burial ground with the cap, you rely on the cap  
4 that goes over it, rather than the liner  
5 underneath.

6 MR. DEE WILLIS: Panel?

7 MR. GERRY POLLET: That's  
8 really true. And what we know is that without  
9 liners, and before you cap it, Hanford's burial  
10 grounds in 20 years release wastes. So that's  
11 why we want liners, leachate collection. It is  
12 an early warning system. And it's supposed to  
13 be designed, it's legally required to be  
14 designed to last 30 years after you close the  
15 landfill and cap it.

16 We know that many of them don't last  
17 30 years. But they are supposed to, and most  
18 today I think will last 30 years, after  
19 closure. But that is why, for instance, you  
20 want to have vitrified high-level waste if you  
21 are going to bury it, instead of cemented,  
22 because it will retain the waste, the  
23 radionuclides much better. It is why we  
24 require treatment of hazardous wastes and why  
25 it's very disappointing that DOE does minimal

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 treatment or volume reduction to reduce the  
2 mobility of radionuclides in their low-level  
3 waste.

4 They made a decision in 1997 to do,  
5 quote, minimal treatment, and minimal waste  
6 minimization of their low-level wastes. And  
7 the impact is modeled into this groundwater  
8 impact. In 300 years, you have release, and in  
9 a thousand years you have release --

10 MR. DEE WILLIS: Time is up,  
11 Gerry. Matt or Tom?

12 Okay. Raise your hand if you want  
13 to ask a question. Okay. So let's do it this  
14 way. One, two, three. Who else? Four, five.  
15 Okay.

16 This lady.

17 MS. NANCY KROENING: Nancy  
18 Kroening. Aren't we paying, big money for  
19 vitrification plant? Will it be used to the  
20 max?

21 MR. DEE WILLIS: Did you get  
22 the question?

23 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: I will  
24 start, I guess. Yes, we are in the middle of  
25 building that plant right now.

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1                   MR. THOMAS CARPENTER:    Yes,  
2   it's big money.  Let's see.  We're looking at,  
3   what are we up to, seven billion?

4                   MR. GERRY POLLET:     5.6.

5                   MR. THOMAS CARPENTER:   5.6  
6   billion to build the thing.

7                   I guess they announced a three-year  
8   delay.  This is our fourth or maybe fifth  
9   attempt to build it.  They just announced that  
10   they're not going to build one of the low-level  
11   melters.

12                   So, there's some question about the  
13   commitment to actually go through with it.  
14   Bechtel has said it's 200,000 hours behind on  
15   the engineering drawings.  I mean, it's got  
16   kind of the earmarks of trouble again.

17                   Concrete has been poured out there.  
18   That's some foundation, which is further than  
19   they have ever gotten.

20                   But what worries I guess the public  
21   interest community the most is essentially the  
22   Department of Energy saying, well, maybe it's  
23   not high-level waste after all, maybe we don't  
24   have to vitrify it after all, so all the weasel  
25   words are coming on, and there are some on the

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Panel Discussion (contd); TSE-0037

1 site who say, two tanks, they want to vitrify  
2 two, and the rest are going to be eventually  
3 left in place.

4 MR. DEE WILLIS: Panel. Okay.  
5 Who's number two? Hyun Lee.

6 **TSE-0037** MR. HYUN LEE: Hyun Lee. I've  
7 got a question for Mike or Matt.

8 Earlier I asked you about the  
9 transportation risk analysis you guys did. And  
10 Mike, you said that most of it assumed that the  
11 shipments of waste would be on a highway, on an  
12 interstate.

13 So does that mean you didn't take  
14 into consideration the likelihood of shipments  
15 being detoured off of the highways onto smaller  
16 rural roads, like what happened in Canyonville  
17 and Riddle in Oregon?

18 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: We did  
19 not look at that, no.

20 MR. HYUN LEE: So can you say  
21 that you actually did a real meaningful site  
22 specific or regional, region specific analysis,  
23 then, of an accident scenario?

24 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: I think  
25 we have, because of the conservatisms built

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Panel Discussion (contd); TSE-0038

1 into the model.

2 MR. DEE WILLIS: Panel?

3 MR. THOMAS CARPENTER: I think  
4 we are going to have to do the EIS again. Good  
5 point.

6 MR. DEE WILLIS: What does  
7 that mean, Tom?

8 MR. THOMAS CARPENTER: We are  
9 going to have to redo the EIS to look at that.

10 MR. DEE WILLIS: Who is number  
11 three?

12 **TSE-0038** MR. FRED MILLER: I am Fred  
13 Miller.

14 One thing I didn't mention in my  
15 comments on how subsidies produce waste, is  
16 that subsidies also produce subsidies. Like a  
17 bureaucracy that's easier to create than to  
18 kill, or an industry that is easier to create  
19 than kill, a subsidy creates a bureaucracy and  
20 an industry that is dependent upon it.

21 So I wonder how confident are we  
22 that 70,000 truck loads, we will say 70,000  
23 truck loads, how likely is it that once there  
24 is an expectation in the industry that you can  
25 get rid of nuclear waste for free, that that

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TSE-0038 (contd); Panel Discussion (contd)

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1 will be built into further plans, and 70,000  
2 truck loads will become 700,000?

3 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: I guess I  
4 don't know the future that well to say that's  
5 going to happen or not going to happen.

6 MR. DEE WILLIS: Panel?

7 MR. THOMAS CARPENTER: Well, I  
8 think as you pointed out, Fred, or maybe  
9 someone else, that there is a plan to go back  
10 into plutonium pit production. That will  
11 create a whole new waste stream at places like  
12 Savannah River, Pantex, Los Alamos, who knows  
13 where else, and where is that waste going to  
14 go?

15 We are talking about protecting the  
16 groundwater in the future, or preventing, you  
17 know, any future catastrophes, and just  
18 stopping creating the stuff I think is rule  
19 number one.

20 But I think you have raised a very  
21 good point. As people around the nation insist  
22 on better cleanups, you are going to have to  
23 have a garbage can, and I think Hanford's it.

24 MR. DEE WILLIS: Who is number  
25 four?

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1                   MR. TIM TAKARO:   Tim Takaro.  
2   My question is regarding the off site waste  
3   coming in and when we will be able to see all  
4   of the nuclear waste that is not only slated  
5   for Hanford but to be moved around the nation.

6                   In this EIS you have the volume in  
7   an upper bound estimate of what the volume is,  
8   but it doesn't describe the risk.

9                   And in order to make these decisions  
10   we need to know what the risk of these wastes  
11   being moved around is.

12                  When are we going to see a  
13   comprehensive waste disposition strategy laid  
14   out for the people of the United States to  
15   discuss?

16                  MR. MICHAEL COLLINS:  You are  
17   talking about a DOE complex-wide, throughout  
18   the whole nation type of analysis?

19                  MR. TIM TAKARO:   All wastes  
20   that are planned, all wastes that exist for the  
21   complex, including commercial.

22                  MR. MATT McCORMICK:  The  
23   Programmatic Waste Management EIS that was  
24   issued in '97 just looked at DOE waste, but  
25   that's the comprehensive analysis in terms of

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TSE-0039; Panel Discussion (contd)

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1 the Department of Energy waste.

2 **TSE-0039**

2 MR. TIM TAKARO: It didn't  
3 have the risk estimates for these various  
4 wastes, it didn't have the arrows coming here,  
5 going there, it didn't have the information  
6 that we need to make decisions like we are  
7 being asked to make in this EIS.

8 So when are we going to have the  
9 comprehensive publicly vetted national strategy  
10 on nuclear materials disposition for this  
11 country? Not going to do it?

12 MR. MATT McCORMICK: Can't  
13 answer it.

14 MR. DEE WILLIS: That's a  
15 comment, as well as a question, I would say.

16 Tom.

17 MR. THOMAS CARPENTER: That  
18 Waste Management Programmatic Environmental  
19 Impact Statement was pretty well ridiculed at  
20 the time it came out as junk.

21 USA Today ran an article on it  
22 called the 59million dollar lemon. Is this  
23 nuclear waste study worth the paper it's  
24 written on? And it quotes from, they quoted  
25 scientists inside the DOE as saying that the

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